

DRAFT
Meeting Minutes
DEFT Team
September 24, 1998
1:00pm to 5:00pm

Participants

Mike Fris, Peter Rhoads, Jim Buell, Jim White, Gary Bobker, Mike Thabault, Matt Vandenberg, Serge Birk, Gary Stern, Tara Smith, Paul Fujitani, BJ Miller, Pete Chadwick, Karl Halupka, Joe Miyamoto, Elise Holland, Bruce Herbold, Ron Ott.

Agenda

- management direction
- DEFT Report

Management Direction

Ron presented version 5 of the Phase II Report recommended actions to management.

Management adopted for now the following:

- a 2,000 cfs Hood facility that would be run by agencies
- the 6,000 cfs CCF screen system
- the 2,500 cfs Tracy screen system
- ISDP with the possible exception of the Grant Line barrier
- flexible operations concept
- shared benefits of new water supply
- a range of scenarios will be evaluated in the Phase II report
- the concept of an env water account even with carryover (but do not call it b2)

Management wants the following from DEFT/DNCT:

- evaluation criteria (tools) for alternatives/scenarios to show to management in a month.
- several new scenarios with different approaches to operations to show to management in a month.
- begin evaluating alternatives and complete evaluation by early 1999.
- assess the likely level of recovery for species for each scenario
- identify the level of benefits for each scenario
- determine how we are going to develop and evaluate scenarios - tell them by Tuesday.

Management also stated:

- they recognize the inadequacies of the models
- for now use ACCORD+CVPIA+b2 water as baseline

Comments and Questions:

The group discussed Ron's points and had the following comments and questions:

1. we need more emphasis on water quality actions.
2. we can consider ourselves one big DEFT-NoName Group - we can attend all meetings of the DNCT and provide recommendations.
3. we should consider the role of the barriers in our ability to flexibly operate system.
4. we can recommend scenarios to DNCT
5. we could start with two scenarios: one which sets conservative standards with a lot of operational flexibility; and a second with less conservative standards that backs off the standards and has less flexibility.
6. we cannot state ESA assurances but we can state what provides the highest level of protection. FWS and NMFS will be responsible for assurances.
7. we have one basic scenario which can be modified by different types of flexibility.
8. we will not be able to model 'flexibility'; but we can make educated guesses as to benefits.

Scenario Discussion

The group proceeded to discuss potential scenarios and how they may be developed.

9. we can hammer out scenarios with Noname.
10. flexible operations include such topics as:
 - changing E/I ratios
 - minimum export levels
 - VAMP
 - export levels
 - inflows/outflows
 - X2 changes
11. tools could include an env water account with its own set of details
 - what efforts are underway to assess the size and operations of the env. water account?
 - could we model the env water acct?
12. NoName is targeting south-of-Delta storage
13. DEFT can tell DNCT what they should incorporate into scenarios (e.g., move exports out of April-May).
14. What proportion of new water should we shoot for? 50/50?
15. Where do we get env water? yield generators and market purchase.
16. George will give us some insights into evaluating need on Tues.
17. Can we prioritize actions that we want in scenarios? DEFT is a prioritizing team.
18. We have some fundamental differences among team members, so it will be a challenge to come up with scenarios and evaluation criteria.

19. We could develop scenarios around these differences: we could have a passage/habitat scenario and an export/diversion scenario.
20. Our habitat package is one area of agreement; it could be common to our scenarios.
21. We could let VAMP, E/I's, etc vary with scenario.
22. We could fix habitat and structures and vary operational flexibility and water supply actions by scenario.
23. We can provide operations and NoName can supply water supply actions.
24. We need to start with basic constraints.
25. Scenarios should balance between biol and water supply benefits.
26. We could assign so many days to env and so many to water supply.

Scenario Ideas

The group then discussed some specific ideas for scenarios to recommend to the DNCT.

27. 0.25 E/I Feb-June with flex oper allowing E/I to increase based on triggers.
28. 0.35 E/I Feb-June with flex oper allowing E/I to decrease based on triggers.
29. Export limits with flex oper to decrease based on triggers.
30. 50 days of 1500 export limit; 150 days of 5000 limit; 250 days of 10000 limit.
31. VAMP - flow and export limits could vary.
32. Low flows pump less - limit amount or proportion of freshwater inflow (volume) taken. Limit E/I to 0.1 in critical years - allow on other sources of water.
33. How do we fit these ideas into a full scenario?
34. Need to confirm with Policy whether we must stay within standards and present framework.

Scenario Evaluation Discussion

The group then began a discussion of how it would evaluate scenarios developed by DNCT.

35. What is important?
36. What can be flexed?
37. How can we rank scenario performance?
38. What are the biol underpins of our evaluation?
39. We can use actual data to evaluate scenarios.
40. We want DNCT to give us 5 scenarios in a month + model runs of each; then we will rank them somehow as to the degree they provide recovery of key species.
41. What would be a good scenario for delta smelt?
 - need flow after spawning to get larvae to Suisun Bay
 - if flow is not available (dry year), then they need protection in the Delta (low exports)
 - need the right cues to send them in the right direction; net downstream flows in areas where they are concentrated.
42. We need to develop a scenario that does these things and use the models to evaluate how well scenarios do these things. We have not discussed how we will test such things in Stage 1. What are the biological mechanisms?
43. The biological opinion for delta smelt will evaluate the preferred alternative in this manner.

44. How will we evaluate the set of actions in a scenario? Best professional judgement.
45. The preferred alternative will take actions as experiments and tests to see if these theories are correct.
46. It will be difficult to take risks with endangered species.
47. With high variability it may be difficult to determine success or failure.
48. We were able to determine that the E/I ratio has failed to protect fish.

At this point Ron reminds the team to address "how are we going to evaluate the DNCT scenarios". We can no longer use color graphs and our complex numbering systems. Policy doesn't like averaging. That we must develop evaluation methods in next four weeks. Further comment ensues.

49. We need to focus intensively on logic behind our evaluations.
50. We need to consider the minority opinions.
51. We need to provide the basis for arguments.
52. We should consider adding other people and perspectives to the teams.
53. Being on the design and evaluation teams may be a conflict.
54. DEFT could receive recommendations from others and spend more effort on minority positions.
55. Agreed that Pete R., Bruce, and Elise will discuss how to evaluate scenarios.

DEFT Report

56. Each team will provide their final appendix reports plus a revised summary paragraph for the body of the report.
57. Objectives should be ranked as to importance and degree of certainty.
58. Introduction cover disagreements on hypotheses.
59. We should reevaluate our set of discriminating hydrological factors.
60. Pete R. will provide an editorial take on goals/objectives.
61. Should include Common Program actions, habitat, and harvest.
62. We will have report finished by next Thursday.
63. Need comments by this Monday.
64. Meet again next Thursday.